

Information pack for people working in
Shropshire on a

Health and Care Worker Visa and Skilled Worker Visa



Shropshire

Free, confidential advice. Whoever you are.

We provide free, independent and confidential advice and support.

We help people overcome their problems and campaign on big issues when their voices need to be heard.

We value diversity, champion equality, and challenge discrimination and harassment.

We're here for everyone.

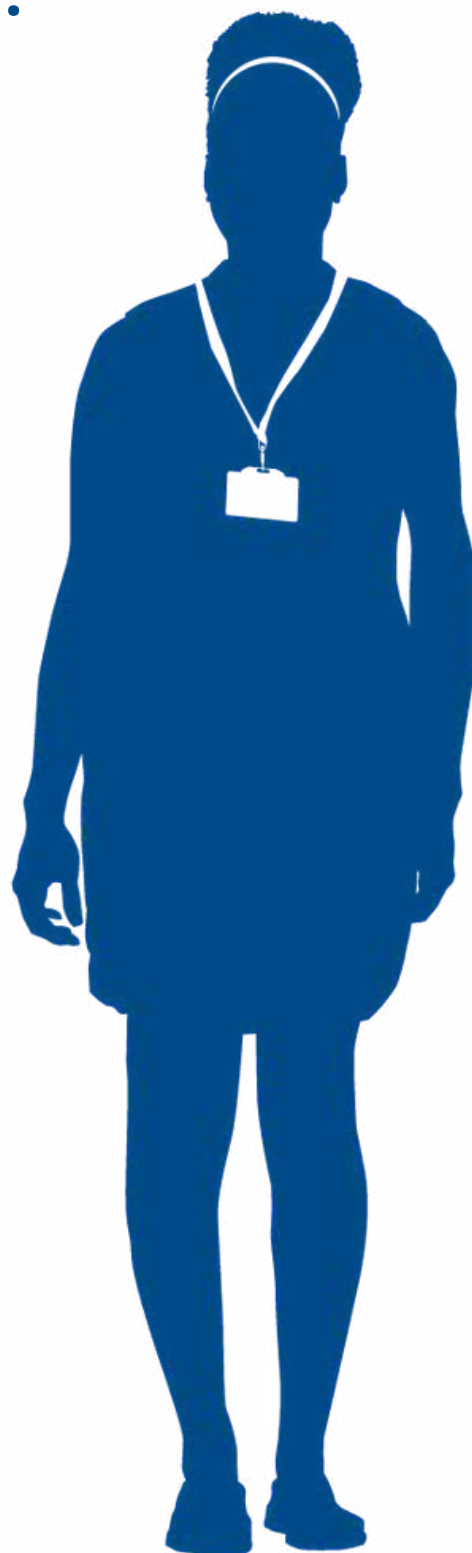
Ways to get advice

**Citizens Advice Shropshire
Free Adviceline**

0808 278 7894

Open Monday to Friday 10am to 4pm

cabshropshire.org.uk



Published: November 2023

Disclaimer: This information was accurate when it was put together and should not be relied upon as detailed advice.

Citizens Advice Shropshire, Charity Registration Number 1085220, Company limited by guarantee, Registered Number 4099352 England, Registered Office: Citizens Advice Shropshire, Fletcher House, 15 College Hill, Shrewsbury, SY1 1LY. Authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority FRN 617564



Your visa

A Health and Care Worker visa

allows medical professionals or care workers to stay in the UK to do an eligible job with the NHS, an NHS supplier or in adult social care. There is no requirement to pay a health care surcharge but they can access NHS services

Find out more:

<https://www.gov.uk/health-care-worker-visa>

A Skilled Worker visa

allows you to stay in the UK to do an eligible job with an approved employer. There is a requirement to pay a health care surcharge in order to access NHS services

Find out more:

<https://www.gov.uk/skilled-worker-visa>

You must be careful to follow the requirements of your visa allowing you to work in the UK.

Under the Skilled Worker scheme or Health and Care Worker scheme you will have a sponsor.

What you can and cannot do



In brief, for both visa routes **you can:**

- work in an eligible job
- study
- bring your partner and children with you as your 'dependants', if they're eligible
- take on additional work in certain circumstances
- do voluntary work
- travel abroad and return to the UK
- apply to settle permanently in the UK (also known as 'indefinite leave to remain') if you've lived in the UK for 5 years and meet the other eligibility requirements

You cannot:

- apply for most benefits (public funds), or the State Pension
- change jobs or employer unless you apply to update your visa



If your application is successful, you'll get a full list of what you can and cannot do with your visa.

No recourse to public funds (NRPF)

Your visa will have a condition that you don't claim 'public funds'. Public funds include most benefits, applying for social housing or making a homelessness application.

Public funds for immigration purposes include the following:

- Universal Credit
- State Pension Credit
- Personal Independence Payment
- Attendance Allowance
- Carer's Allowance
- Disability Living Allowance
- Housing Benefit
- Health in Pregnancy Grant
- Maternity Expenses Payment
- Funeral Expenses Payment
- Cold Weather Payment
- Winter Fuel Payment
- Budgeting Loan Payment
- Child Benefit
- Social Housing & Homelessness Assistance
- Council Tax Reduction Schemes
- A Discretionary Support Payment made in accordance with any regulations made under article 135 of the Welfare Reform (Northern Ireland) Order 2015
- A Discretionary Payment made by a local authority under section 1 of the Localism Act 2011

If you have worked in the UK for 2 years or more you might have made enough NI contributions to get jobseekers allowance if unemployed, or ESA if unable to work due to sickness.

You should also check what you can do if you can claim public funds but you have a partner or child who can't.



If you're struggling because you're not allowed to claim public funds, there might be other support you can get



If you apply for public funds when you're not allowed to your application for public funds will usually be refused.

The Home Office might also refuse any immigration applications you make in the future.

They might also refuse an application to:

- extend your visa
- change to a different visa
- get a permanent right to live in the UK - this is called 'indefinite leave'

In rare cases, the Home Office might take you to court or end your visa early. If you're worried that you've claimed public funds when you weren't allowed to, talk to an adviser.

Things to consider while settling in UK



It is essential you keep records like electronic or paper copies of documents, contracts, receipts for payments and tenancy agreements

Know how to prove your immigration status

Your Health and Care Worker visa or Skilled Worker visa grants you permission to live and work in the UK for the duration of its validity. However, there are certain situations where you need to prove your immigration status to others, such as your employer or landlord.

Before you start work, your sponsoring employer will need to carry out a right to work check to ensure you have the necessary permission to work in the UK. Likewise, before you can enter into a tenancy agreement to rent a property in England, your landlord will need to carry out a right to rent check.

Recent changes to the rules on right to work checks and right to rent checks mean that employers and landlords can no longer accept some physical documents such as Biometric Residence Permit (BRP) as proof of your status. Instead, they will need to carry out the necessary checks online. This is also the case if you have an eVisa.

To enable your employer or landlord to carry out an online check, they will ask you to provide them with your date of birth and your 'share code'. Your share code is a 9-character long unique code which you can generate online and will enable your employer or landlord to access the necessary information on the Home Office system.

If you have UK Visas and Immigration account you can use the online service to view and prove your immigration status: <https://www.gov.uk/view-prove-immigration-status>

If you do not have a UK Visas account there are different services:

- prove your right to work to an employer: <https://www.gov.uk/prove-right-to-work>
- prove your right to rent to a landlord: <https://www.gov.uk/prove-right-to-rent>

Apply for your National Insurance Number

A National Insurance Number is a requirement for working in the UK and all employers will require it. National Insurance contributions are a tax on earnings and self-employed profits paid by employees, employers and the self-employed. They can help to build your entitlement to certain benefits depending on whether you are employed or self-employed, such as the State Pension and Maternity Allowance. Some social security benefits will be dependant on payment of sufficient National Insurance Contributions.



To get a National Insurance number you need to apply online:

www.gov.uk/apply-national-insurance-number/how-to-apply

You'll need to prove your identity when you apply.

You can get help with your application from the National Insurance number application helpline:

Telephone: 0800 141 2079

Monday to Friday, 8am to 5pm

Setting up a UK bank account

Opening a bank account in the UK is a wise move for newcomers to the country. Hefty transaction fees can quickly rack up if you continue to use foreign debit or credit cards in the UK, and having a local bank account can also be essential for setting up bill payments and receiving your salary.

You can open your UK bank account in a bank branch, through the bank's website, or even using the bank's mobile app.

Find out how to get a bank account: <https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/debt-and-money/banking/getting-a-bank-account/>

Cost of living

Aside from the official, fixed costs of obtaining a UK visa and access to healthcare, it's also important to consider the general cost of living. This will vary widely depending on where in the country you settle. It can be useful to sit down and make a list of your expected monthly outgoings, so you can budget yourself accordingly.

Our budgeting tool can help you with this:

www.citizensadvice.org.uk/debt-and-money/budgeting/budgeting/work-out-your-budget/

Factors to take into account include:

Housing

Renting Privately

The quickest way to find a property is online, on property search websites. You can easily search for the exact area you want and arrange viewings.

If it's hard for you to look for a property online you could visit local estate agents. It's also worth asking friends and checking local noticeboards and newspapers.

Before you can rent a property you'll need to provide information and documents to show you'll be a good tenant.

When you've found a property to rent, you'll have to make some payments before you move in.

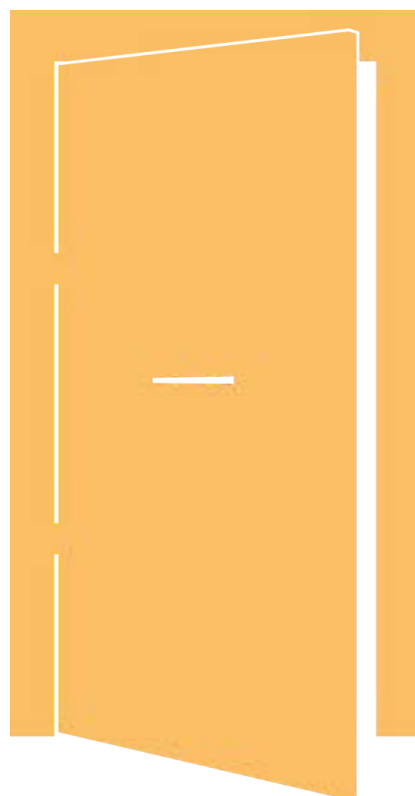
You'll usually have to pay:

- a tenancy deposit - no more than 6 weeks' rent
- 1 to 2 months' rent in advance

Get a receipt from your landlord or letting agent when you pay any money. You'll need this in case there are any problems.

As a tenant paying rent, you have certain rights and responsibilities. You can find further information on renting privately here:

www.citizensadvice.org.uk/housing/renting-privately/
www.gov.uk/private-renting



Your landlord is responsible for undertaking certain repairs. You can check how to get repairs done when you renting privately:

- <https://check-how-to-get-repairs-done-in-your-rented-home.form.service.justice.gov.uk/>
- www.citizensadvice.org.uk/housing/repairs-in-rented-housing/repairs-what-are-your-options-if-you-are-a-private-rented-tenant/



It is important you pay your rent when it is due and on time. If you discover you cannot do this, you should contact Citizens Advice to speak to an adviser www.citizensadvice.org.uk/debt-and-money/rent-arrears/

If you're not allowed to claim public funds, this includes applying for council housing or making a homelessness application to your local council

Council tax

Most people living in UK have to pay council tax – a monthly charge to cover the costs of things like rubbish collection. It is set and collected by local authorities.

You can find out how council tax works and learn whether you might be eligible for a discount or exemption.

You can also learn how to appeal your council tax band or liability:

- www.citizensadvice.org.uk/housing/council-tax/
- www.shropshire.gov.uk/council-tax/

If you've missed a council tax payment, you're in 'arrears' - this means you owe money to your council. You should contact your council straight away. Don't wait for them to contact you. Ask to speak to someone in the council tax office and tell them about your situation. They should be able to tell you how to get help - for example, they might help you find a free debt adviser.

Utilities

Arrange the utilities in your new home:

- gas
- electricity
- broadband
- telephone

Your tenancy agreement should detail whether you or your landlord are responsible for paying for the gas or electricity.



If you're struggling to pay your bills or you owe money, there are things you can do.

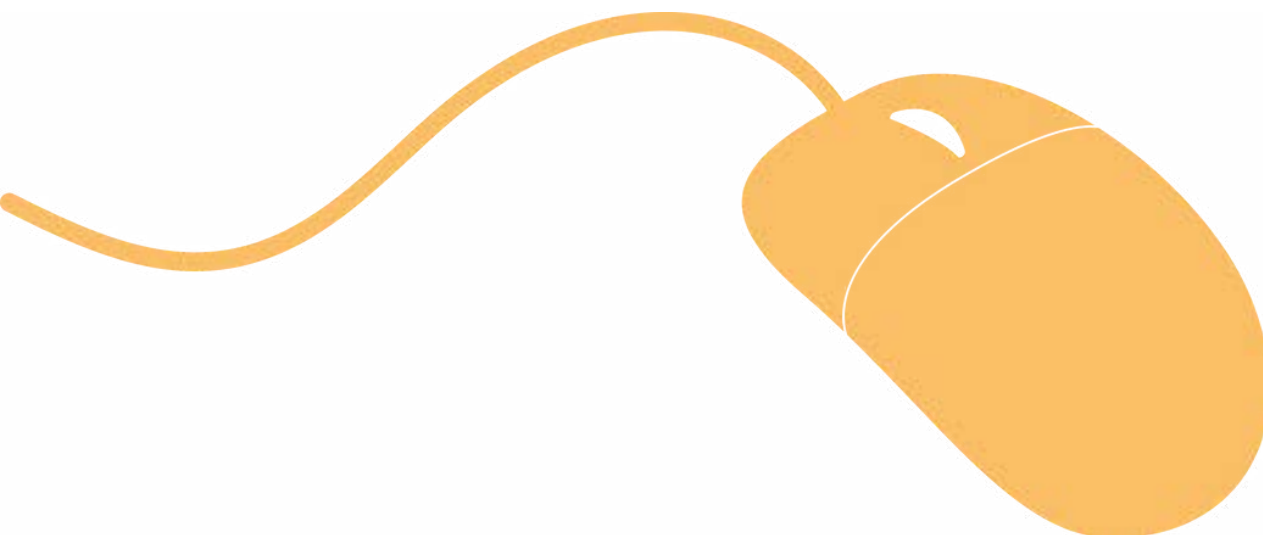
You might be able to get a cheaper deal or get help and support from your provider. Find out more:

- www.citizensadvice.org.uk/debt-and-money/budgeting/budgeting/get-help-with-bills/
- www.moneyhelper.org.uk/en/money-troubles/cost-of-living

Access to a computer

You can access a computer and the internet for free in most local libraries. If you live, work or study in Shropshire you can become a member - it's free.

You can join online at www.shropshire.gov.uk/libraries/join-the-library/
Or at your nearest library www.shropshire.gov.uk/libraries/find-a-library/



Mobile

If you've just arrived in the United Kingdom, one of the first things you'll probably want to cross off your checklist is getting a local SIM card and setting up a UK mobile phone number.

You have two options when it comes to a UK SIM card: a prepaid SIM or a contract. The right option for you will depend on your circumstances, and there are a surprising number of UK mobile operators to choose from.



Access to healthcare

Hospital treatment is free of charge for people who are ordinarily resident in the UK. This does not depend on nationality, payment of UK taxes, National Insurance contributions, being registered with a GP, having an NHS number, or owning property in the UK. To be considered ordinarily resident, you must be living in the UK on a lawful and properly settled basis for the time being.

Anyone in England can **register and consult with a GP** without charge. An application to join a practice can only be refused if the practice has reasonable grounds for doing so. GP practices are not required to ask for proof of identity, address or immigration status from patients wishing to register. NHS guidance on how to register with a GP surgery clearly outlines that a practice cannot refuse a patient because they do not have proof of address or immigration status.

www.nhs.uk/nhs-services/gps/how-to-register-with-a-gp-surgery/

You have to pay for medicines you get on a prescription from a doctor.

You have to pay to access optician services.

You can find a **dental surgery** that's convenient for you, whether it's near your home or work, and phone them to see if there are any NHS appointments available.

Find a dentist www.nhs.uk/service-search/find-a-dentist

NHS **111** is the free number to call when you have an urgent healthcare need.

Call 999 if it's a life-threatening emergency.

Food costs

It's easy to buy the food you need when you need it, often every day.

Although it might seem more expensive at the time, it often works out cheaper to do a weekly shop. This way, you can set yourself a weekly budget and stick to it.

Find out more about cutting the cost of your food shopping:

www.moneysavingexpert.com/shopping/cheap-supermarket-shopping/



There are various **food banks** in the local area for emergency food- you may need a referral from Citizens Advice or another local agency.

Emergency food in Shropshire www.shropshirelarder.org.uk/emergencyfood

Transport

If you buy a **car** you must have a valid driver's license and tax, MOT and insurance for your vehicle.

Find out more:

- <https://www.gov.uk/buy-a-vehicle>
- <https://www.gov.uk/stopped-by-police-while-driving-your-rights>



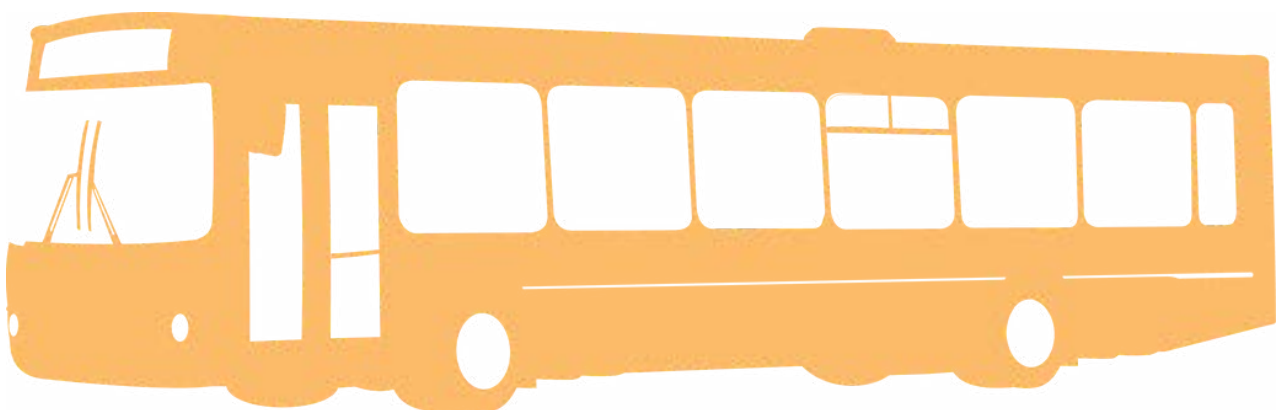
Public transport is likely to be cheaper than driving. However, there are still ways to save significant amounts of money – mainly by planning ahead.

Saving on train tickets

- Get a Railcard. You get a third off on many routes, so you might save £20 on a ticket that would have cost £60. You'll often find that the cost of a Railcard pays for itself over one or two long trips. Apply for one on the Railcard website www.railcard.co.uk
- Get a season ticket if you travel regularly.
- Always check for advance tickets. Some cheap advance tickets might still be available the day before you travel.
- Look out for special offers, discounts and deals.
- Think about going by coach instead. It usually takes longer, but if you have time, going by coach is often cheaper than making the same journey by train.

Saving on bus tickets

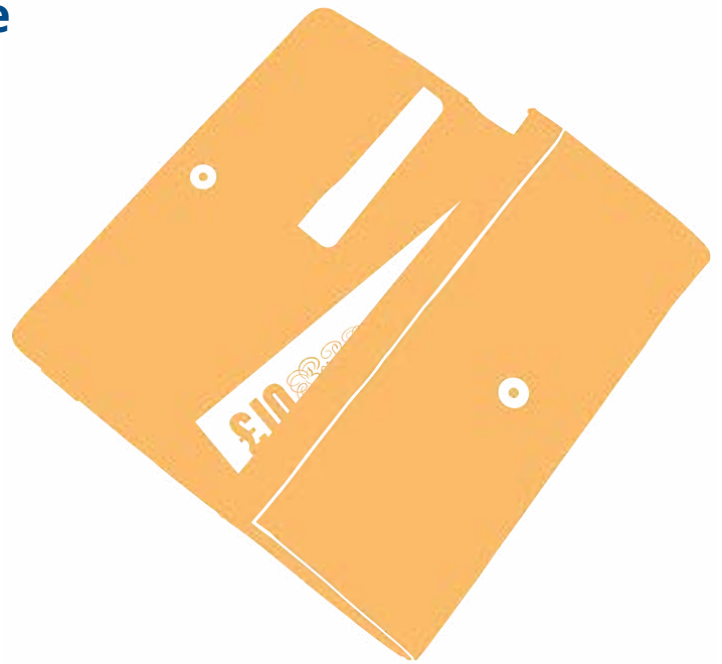
- You may qualify for a pass that saves you money on fares with your local bus operator. Each operator has their own guidelines around this, so be sure to check their website to see if you qualify.
- Consider getting a season ticket. If you use the bus on a daily basis, you can save a lot of money over a year with a monthly pass or annual season ticket. The catch with this is that you have to pay upfront for the pass. Having a season ticket or monthly pass works out cheaper than paying for each journey separately.
- Look out for special deals during school breaks and bank holidays, some national coach companies offer fares as cheap as £1. This may be a good starting point for planning a cheap day out for the family. Some local operators also offer special priced group tickets for adults and children.
- Use free bus services. Many big cities have free bus or shuttle services from the main train or bus station. Before visiting a new city, see if they have any free bus services, and if the route takes you close to where you need to go.



Sending money back home

Whether you're moving to the UK to work, study or both, you may need to send money back to loved ones at home. As with everything else to do with your relocation, it's a good idea to research the costs attached to this.

While banks and traditional over-the-counter money transfer companies are long-standing options, there's also a newer generation of online-only remittance companies to consider.



Bringing your family over

Your partner and children can also apply to join you or stay in the UK as your 'dependants' if they're eligible. They'll need to complete separate applications. Your partner and children must have a certain amount of money available to support themselves while they're in the UK unless the employer has confirmed they will meet the first month's expenses on the certificate of sponsorship.

As part of an application, your partner and children will need to prove their identity.

Find out more:

- Health and Care visa www.gov.uk/health-care-worker-visa/your-partner-and-children
- Skilled Worker visa www.gov.uk/skilled-worker-visa/your-partner-and-children

Look into childcare and schooling options

Foreign national children resident in the UK normally have the right to attend state-funded and independent schools in England. It is the responsibility of the parents to check that their children have a right under their UK entry conditions to study at a school before applying for a place.

Find out more www.gov.uk/guidance/schools-admissions-applications-from-overseas-children

Work

Guidance on applying for health and social care jobs in the UK from abroad



www.gov.uk/government/publications/applying-for-health-and-social-care-jobs-in-the-uk-from-abroad/applying-for-health-and-social-care-jobs-in-the-uk-from-abroad

Employment

Your employment contract is your legal agreement with your employer. It includes things like what your job is, how you'll do your work and what your employer will pay you.

Your employer should give you an employment contract document called a 'written statement'. Your written statement will include some of the terms of your employment contract, but there might be other terms.

The written statement must include information like:

- how much and how often you'll be paid
- where you'll be working
- the hours you have to work
- how much holiday you'll get
- the rules about sick leave and sick pay

You can check the full details of what needs to be in the written statement on GOV.UK. If your employer hasn't given you a written statement, ask them to send you one.

The law also says you have a number of employment rights called 'statutory rights'. You have these rights even if they're not mentioned in the contract.

Find out more www.citizensadvice.org.uk/work/basic-rights-and-contracts/contracts-of-employment

If you face difficulties with your employer, you can find support here:
www.citizensadvice.org.uk/work

Examples of difficulties you might have when you should seek advice and support:

- Being treated worse than your UK co-workers at work. Treating a worker less favourably because of their nationality can be unlawful discrimination.
- Being racially harassed at work.
- Not being paid the rate of pay you were promised.
- Being dismissed.



If your employer hasn't paid you what they owe you

Your employer should pay you on time for work you've done - they should pay you on your agreed payday.

You can challenge your employer if:

- they haven't paid your wages
- they've underpaid you
- they've deducted some or all of your wages - and you don't agree with their reason
- If you have a payslip, you can check it to help you work out exactly what the problem is. You should talk to your employer to find out why they haven't paid you what you expected. If they've made a mistake, ask them to pay you straight away.

Find out more www.citizensadvice.org.uk/work/pay/problems-getting-paid

If you've lost your job and your employer sponsored your visa

If you are on a Health and Care Worker Visa or Skilled Worker Visa and you resign or are dismissed, your employer has 10 days to tell the Home Office.

You will then receive a letter giving 60 days' notice of cancellation of your visa.

You then have 60 days to get a new visa or leave the country, even if you have been unfairly dismissed.

If you want to continue to work and stay in the UK, you'll need to either:

- get a new sponsored job
- change to a different type of leave



Contact Citizens Advice to speak to an adviser if you've lost your job before the date your visa is due to end.

If you work when you're not allowed to

It's against the law to work in the UK if you know you're not allowed to.

This includes:

- doing types of work you're not allowed to do
- working more hours than you're allowed to

The Department of Work and Pensions and local Job Centres may be able to provide assistance in finding appropriate or additional work if your visa allows:
find-your-nearest-jobcentre.dwp.gov.uk/search.php

Debt

If you get into debt when living in the UK you should get help early.

Visit www.citizensadvice.org.uk/debt-and-money/help-with-debt/ or contact Citizens Advice Shropshire for help with debts.



Discrimination

If you've been treated unfairly or harassed, you should check if what happened is covered by the Equality Act 2010. This is the law that stops employers, businesses and service providers discriminating against you.

If it's covered by the Equality Act, it's '**unlawful discrimination**' - this means the discrimination is against the law. You can take action if you've experienced unlawful discrimination.

Find out more: www.citizensadvice.org.uk/law-and-courts/discrimination/

Hate Crime

Hate incidents and hate crimes are acts of violence or hostility directed at people because of who they are or who someone thinks they are.

For example, you may have been verbally abused by someone in the street because you're disabled or someone thought you were gay.

If you or someone you know has experienced a hate crime or hate incident, you can get help from hate crime support services.

You can also report it to the police. If you don't want to talk to the police, you can ask an independent organisation to report it for you anonymously. These organisations are called 'third party reporting centres'.

If the incident happened at your home, school or workplace, you can also speak to your landlord, school or employer.

In an emergency, you should call 999. If it is not an emergency, call 101.

Check if you've experienced a hate crime or hate incident
www.citizensadvice.org.uk/law-and-courts/discrimination/hate-crime/what-are-hate-incidents-and-hate-crime

You can get help whether or not you decide to report the hate crime or hate incident.



Getting support

Citizens Advice Shropshire

Advice on benefits, debt, housing and more
0808 278 7894 (FREE)
Open Monday to Friday 10 am to 4 pm
www.cabshropshire.org.uk



Shropshire Council

General Enquiries: 0345 678 9000
Council Tax: [0345 678 9002](tel:03456789002)
www.shropshire.gov.uk



Shropshire Supports Refugees

Co-ordinates a range of activities that help refugees settle into their new area, improve well-being, and fulfil goals for themselves and their children.
01743 216 758
info@shropshiresupportsrefugees.co.uk
www.shropshiresupportsrefugees.org

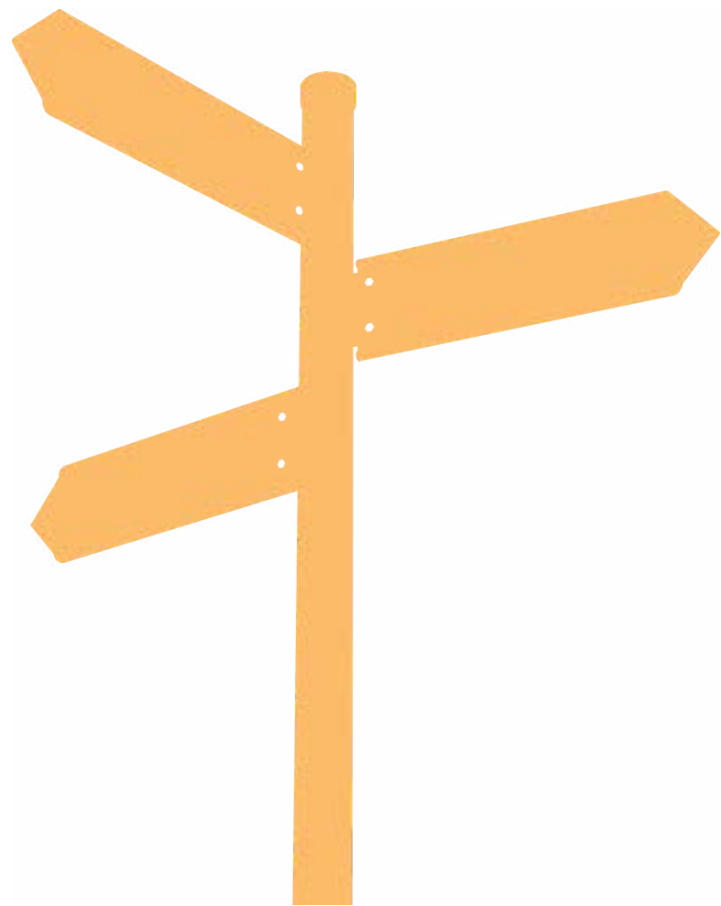


The Shropshire Larder

A community information resource, bringing together the support available in Shropshire for people on low incomes
www.shropshirelarder.org.uk

Shropshire Local Directory

Gives information on support organisations in the towns and villages in Shropshire.
<https://shropshire-directory.co.uk/>



NRPF Network

National network safeguarding the welfare of people who are unable to access benefits due to their immigration status. They do not give advice to individuals but have useful online resources for people who have No Recourse to Public Funds
www.nrpfnetwork.org.uk/

Migrant Help

01304 203977 or 07766 668781
www.migranthehelpuk.org/

Project 17

Advice on housing and financial options for families with children facing severe poverty/homelessness because they have No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF)
07963 509 0044
www.project17.org.uk

The Unity Project

Support to have NRPF condition removed if applicable and other support
www.unity-project.org.uk

Mental health support

Moving to another country can feel overwhelming. After a significant move, you might find yourself experiencing unusual levels of sadness, irritability, anxiety, or exhaustion. You may also miss your family and friends back home. You don't have to suffer in silence. You can ask your GP for help.

Here is a list of other organisations you can turn to for mental health support:



Samaritans

Whatever you're going through, you can call them any time.
116 123 (FREE)
Email jo@samaritans.org
www.samaritans.org/



Mind

Call our Infoline on 0300 123 3393
Email info@mind.org.uk
<https://www.mind.org.uk/>



Shropshire Mental Health Support

01743 368 647
<https://www.shropshiremhs.com/>